

ORRS (Ohio Radio Reading Services) Capital Project Narrative

FY 23-24 Total: \$97,662.00

\$26,726 Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI)

CABVI's Radio Reading Services (RRS) is requesting capital in the amount of \$29,928 to purchase sound dampening materials for seven of its existing studios and control rooms.

Justification: The broadcast studios are located near the space where volunteer readers are preparing their materials to read on the air and organizing their team efforts as to the sequence and content of their portion of each broadcast. Although CABVI's volunteers intend to be mindful of the studios, the volume of their voices can be less than conducive to high quality recording. Adequately soundproofing these rooms will greatly improve the listening quality of CABVI's broadcasts for the individuals that we are serving. Major components of the project are soundproofing materials and mounting kits.

\$66,211 VOICEcorps (Columbus Radio Reading Service)

This project supports the reliability of Ohio's radio reading services by ensuring that transmissions do not cease during emergencies, severe weather conditions, accidents or electrical grid failures which take down the power supply to the largest and most widely available reading service in the State. An emergency stand-by generator is common practice to prevent service outages for broadcasters of the size and service area of Voicecorps. The population affected by this project is estimated at more than 80,000 blind or severely visually impaired Ohio residents.

Justification: Voicecorps Reading Service, the State's oldest and most widely available broadcast reading service, provides audio versions of current print to more than half of the State. We read to residents in 58 counties who are blind, visually impaired, and others whose disability prevents reading print. Should power be interrupted to our facility in Columbus, all residents in these counties would be without access to vital news and information which they rely on to live more independently.

This project is the natural extension in the efforts Ohio has made to preserve information access on an equal footing for blind and disabled residents with sighted or non-disabled peers. The population which uses Ohio's radio reading services is predominately elderly. After a lifetime of reading for education, general knowledge, or pleasure, they are suddenly unable to acquire germane information we all use to live independently. Grocery flyers are inaccessible. Newspaper accounts of local

construction projects, transportation issues, politics and entertainment are suddenly out of reach.

With a reading service transmitted into the resident's home, they can be reconnected to the local community, and can better make independent decisions about where to shop, how to vote, and what to do when social opportunities arise for entertainment or when familial connections are available post-pandemic.

During the pandemic, reading services played a vital role in providing access to the latest information on social distancing, mask requirements, vaccine availability and other hygienic information that saved lives. Every day, people turn to their reading service to gather information which enables them to remain connected with family and friends, participate in discussion on current events and delay or eliminate the need to move from their own home for some form of congregate care facility.

In those facilities, reading services help staff to prolong the connections to the world between residents and families as well as the communities they moved from. Reading services used in and out of long-term care facilities help aged residents maintain dignity and greater independence by offering helpful information on living with vision loss, state and private sector services, or simply by being a friendly human voice in an otherwise lonely day.

This project will ensure that a disaster, man-made or natural, does not interrupt the flow of information to this very vulnerable population, and help to ensure that the State fulfills its role in serving the needs of all its citizens regardless of disability.

\$4,725 Youngstown Radio Reading Services (YRRS)

Our studio furnishings are used in conjunction with our computers and equipment in our recording studios and control room. These furnishings include tables, our control room desk, a shelving unit and chairs.

Justification: The tables used in the recording studios as well as the main desk and shelving unit used in the control room date to 1992 and the office chairs range from 10 to 15 years old. All of these furnishings are in constant use by both employees and volunteers and are in need of replacement due to significant deterioration from age and use.